Medicine Bow Landscape Vegetation Analysis (LaVA) Project

Meeting Minutes

July 12th, 2017

0930-1530

In attendance:

Carson Engelskirger – State Forestry	Jerod Delay – FS
Travis Pardue – State Forestry	Daron Reynolds – FS
Justin Williams – WDA	Liz D'Arcy – FS
Melissa Martin – Forest Service	Dennis Jaeger – FS
Kelly Lomagno – FS	Steve Loose – FS
Kelle Reynolds – FS	Dave Gloss - FS
Josh Peck – FS	Paula Guenther – FS
Tim Douville – FS	Kawa Ng – GS
Larry Hicks – LSRCD	Corey Class – WGFD
Mark Conrad – WYDEQ	Leanne Correll – SERCD
Dena Egenhoff – Cheyenne BOPU	

AGENDA TOPICS

1. **Welcome and Project Update**
   - **Roadless Package**
     - Submitted to RO on May 24th and had a meeting on June 14th. RO is onboard and supporting efforts. 25 Roadless maps were submitted.
     - Total IRA proposal was 127,287 (54%)
   - **Notice of Intent**
     - Not being signed by Dennis, being signed by under secretary
     - Submitted to WO on June 16th.
     - Scheduled to have publication in public register on July 21st.
   - **Final TOA Figures**
     - Maps are uploaded onto cloud/vault site
     - Dennis signed internal memo of finalization of treatment opportunity areas this morning July 12th.
   - **Project timeline and upcoming milestones**
     - Melissa/Paula are behind on developing scoping document. Hoping to have a draft for internal review for July 26th. Will be asking resource specialists to prepare poster for public meeting.
     - Scheduled public meeting for August 8th in Laramie (Lincoln Community Center) and August 10th in Saratoga (Community Center) both from 5-8pm.
   - **New Cloud/Vault site and recent uploads**
     - Liz Darcy is now primary GIS personnel.
   - **Public Scoping –introduction**
     - Discuss who will be willing to help at public meetings.
2. **Vegetation and Fire/Fuels Proposed Action**
   - Wanted to find percentage change in tree canopy cover. This is an adaptive management process in regards to treatments. These treatment options will be selected based upon stand conditions. This is based on photo interpreted model data.

- o Looking for what types of projects people would like to see in the green tree/lynx areas. Some of this information has been submitted prior and has been consolidated.
- o Plans allow direct suppression, prescription (wilderness areas) and perimeter. Focusing on three fuel models. This includes, timber understory, timber litter, and timber understory 1.
- o Implementation of projects is based on the District Ranger or decision makers. Possibly develop criteria to help with prioritization. It is important to consider all factors prior to making treatments. Include an outline that the map is one factor in making the decision.
- o There are areas where fires cannot be started and there is concern of fire reaching such areas.
- o Need to have as much flexibility with regards to the NEPA. In public meetings it will be helpful to have hypothetical examples.

3. Transportation and Access Needs
- o Would it be more ideal to break up the temp roads annually to as not to intimidate the public and to justify the need? Potentially use a scale or miles of road per number of acres.

4. Cumulative Watershed Effects (CWE)
- o BMP's to address incremental impacts. BMP's will be important in this project.
- o Protect the long term health and how we are showing compliance with the LAVA project. Harvest/roads may affect streamflow and sediment and this is the primary focus for LAVA CWE analysis. The disturbance index approach is the best option for looking at cumulative effects of streamflow in order to maintain flexibility. This accounts for activities and normalizes the activity. Acceptable threshold of risk (25%). Existing disturbance index for scoping phase is being utilized but the disturbance index is being updated.
- o A similar approach is being used to address sediment.
- o Concern for use of disturbance measurement for a system that is always fluctuating. Are we asking the right questions in a disturbance based ecosystem? Important to explain the natural variation of disturbance to the public. Possibly have a ranking prioritization versus a specific number for qualitative measure.

5. Project Caps v. Project Thresholds
- o Break areas up in order to describe to the public. The analysis needs more specificity. Some unsuitable lynx habitat that can still be managed. Some threshold have already been defined others will need to be determined by line officers. Area of Beaver Creek and other treatment areas are still considered in the event that work is still able to be done. Push thresholds in areas where we have concerns. Implement treatments that are consistent with thresholds.

6. Public Scoping-Revisited
- o Aug 8 Laramie Gateway Center, Aug 10 Saratoga Community Center both 4-8pm
- o Have materials available at least a week prior so presenters can review beforehand.
- o For comments have an area where they may circle what topic they are commenting about. Also have an area where they can state if they approve or not of the project.
- o Emphasize the why of the project.
- o Have a poster with all partners on it.
- o Combine steps 2 and 6. Maybe have an electronic online venue which may allow for more attendance.
- o 4pm is stated to have a difficult start time for the public and it is important to have a formal presentation possibly on the hour and then allow the public to ask questions at stations.
- o Healthy Forest Recreation Act limits alternatives.

7. Next Steps
- o There will be a 30 day comment period that will end August 21st.

- A more detailed sign-up sheet will be provided by Melissa tomorrow July 13th.

8. **Wrap Up**
   - The Cooperative Agency meeting will be cancelled on August 9th.

9. **Improvements**
   - Little time to go to cloud/vault due to business. Possibly once a week announce what has been changed/updated in the cloud/vault so participants can look at it.
   - Limitations in the travel distance. Potentially have some meetings in Saratoga.
   - Thank you to the team. There is a lot of cooperation and you have done your best to keep people in the loop and to listen to what people are saying. Engaging is key.
   - The cookies are helping a lot.
   - Very organized.

Meeting adjourned.